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War comes to Damascus in Syria revolt 'turning point'



Damaged shops are pictured in Homs.

DAMASCUS (AFP) - Syria's military deployed armoured vehicles near central Damascus yesterday as troops battled rebels around the capital in what activists said could be a turning point in the 16-month uprising.

Russia,

meanwhile,

Continued on page 6

slammed as "blackmail" Western pressure to push for a UN Security Council resolution against Syria's regime and said it would be "unrealistic" for its ally President Bashar al-Assad to quit.

Last Saturday, Aruba received the good news that the national champions of Aruba defeated St. Thomas of the U.S. Virgin Islands 10-4 today to win the Latin America regional championship in Costa Rica and qualify for the Junior League Baseball World Series in Taylor Michigan.

Aruba's pitcher, Gillian Wernet, kept the Virgin islands batters of balance. Wernet gave up four runs on seven hits in pitching six innings. Jeandrick Oduber threw a one-two-three seventh inning to end the game.

It will be the second appearance in four years for a team from Aruba in the World Series for the best teams of 13- and 14-year-olds.

The World Series for the

best teams of 13- and 14-year-old baseball players from around the globe will take place August 12-18, 2012. Taylor is the only city ever to host the Junior League World

Series, which debuted in 1981. Congratulations to the Aruba North All-Stars from Oranjestad, Aruba, you've made Aruba proud once again!



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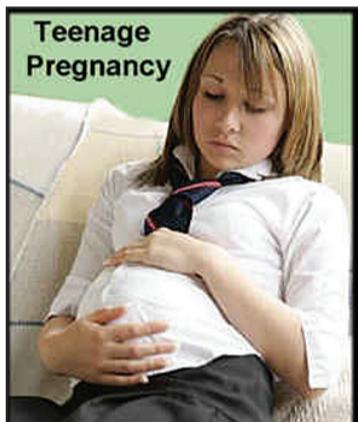
Aruba's Teenage Pregnancy situation compares to Caribbean according to Minister Visser

ORANJESTAD -- During the past weekend, organizations working in the field of Family Planning in the Caribbean gathered here for their annual meeting which was held in the Aruba Holiday Inn Resort.

Present at their meeting were Aruban ministers, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar and Minister of Public Health & Sports, Richard Visser. Visser remarked, after hearing the various accounts of the situation on the other islands, that the situation on Aruba with respect to teenage and unwanted pregnancies is very much the same as on the other islands. He indicated that the challenges of teenage pregnancies and of unwanted pregnancies is felt across the entire Caribbean.

According to Visser, "Aruba needs to take a look at the consequences of the figures and that the statistics of teenage pregnancies have consequences for our island and is the cause of the challenges of education and the intellectual capacity of the island, and has poverty as one of its consequences."

Editor: Aruba needs to look at the problem itself, the



statistics is not our problem, it is the teenage pregnancies that are the problem. The increase of the many cases is what becomes a challenge for Aruba. There is also no consolation in the fact that our situation is comparable to others.

Correctly stated, the Minister alluded to the fact that all partners on the island ought to be working together to make this a problem of the past. For the meeting in Aruba, the following countries were represented: the Bahamas, Grenada, the USA, Nevis, Antigua, Bermuda, St. Lucia, Curacao, Anguilla, Dominica, St. Vincent, Martinique, Guadeloupe and the Aruba Famia Planea.

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Tuesday Daily Raffle \$ 500 - BlackJack Tournament

Wednesday Daily Raffle \$ 500 - Cool Casino - LADIES NIGHT

Thursday Daily Raffle \$ 500 Earn DOUBLE POINTS

Friday BlackJack Tournament

Saturday KOFFIE MORGEN



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Aruba Lottery: Proud sponsors of Aruba Hi-winds wind and kite surfing!

The 26th Aruba Hi-Winds international activity was a tremendous success this year again with Aruba's Lottery one of its major sponsors. For months two trainees, Ivar van Luyk and Reinier Middel worked diligently on the organization of the annual event. They are very proud to have been a part of the organizing commission. This year's activities took place between July 3 to 9 at the Fisherman's Huts and Boca Grandi.

Participants, children and adults, came from all over the world to compete in the different categories. However, all eyes were on our own Aruban world-class surfers, namely, Ethan Westra world champion in his class, and Steven Max just returning from France celebrating his freestyle victory.

The competition which began back in the 80's as a windsurfing competition has expanded into a competition of kite surfing at Boca Grandi. Meanwhile the windsurfing competitions have moved from Eagle Beach to Fisherman's Huts. Different musical bands, such as Orange Grove, Datapanik, Honeypot, Time Banditsz and Earplugs, as well as different DJ's entertained the public during the entire day.

Even Josh Angelo was here for the occasion. Josh Angelo comes from a family with a long history of windsurfing athletes, co-organizers of events around the world and the makers of windsurfing equipment.

Josh is one of the top 10 in the Professional Windsurfers Association (PWA) in the discipline of slalom. Just like his father who brought Josh and his brother to Aruba as children when he was involved in the organization of Aruba Hi-Winds as part of the PWA,



likewise Josh brought his son with him to this year's Aruba Hi-Winds!

In this way, the third generation of the Angelo family has become acquainted with Aruba. Aruba's Lotto representative exclaimed... "We are

our proud young athletes Sarah-Quita, Ethan and Steven and all who may come after them. Thanks to those who came first and laid the foundation for windsurfing on Aruba!

Lotto, Aruba's Lottery with its various products such as



very happy to have been part of such an enthusiastic, successful, high caliber and internationally famous event." "Aruba Hi-Winds had the full support of Lotto, Aruba's Lottery, not only because it is an event that stimulates our youth to practice sports, but also because it is proof that those who love sports and our country can take the name of Aruba to every corner of the globe.

Twenty-six years after the first Aruba Hi-Winds, we can celebrate today the triumphs of

Lotto di Dia, Lotto 5, Mini Mega, Catoochi, Big 4, Zodiac and now also Wega di Number di Korsou, collecting funds and changing lives of her winners and those who benefit from the funds collected for their favorite sports. Just a few weeks ago, Lotto submitted a donation of one million dollars to the subsidy sports commission. In this same manner, periodically Lotto, Aruba's Lottery, will be making donations to the commission which in turn subsidizes athletics on Aruba.

Tuesday

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Comradery between Dominican Republic and Aruba is evident



On Saturday, July 14th the Consulate of the Dominican Republic on Aruba inaugurated the brand new Juan Pablo Duarte Plaza situated in front of the old hospital building in Oranjestad.

In February of this year the ceremonial act of ground-breaking and laying of the first stone was officiated. That act was officiated in the presence of the Dominican Secretary of State, Mr. Luis Sifres of the Dominican Republic, President of the Aruba Parliament, Paul Croes and Ministers of Aruba. The

newly inaugurated Plaza is in honor of the colony of Dominicans who have come to work and live on Aruba over the past years.

At the occasion, the Prime Minister of Aruba indicated that a small part of Aruba is dedicated to honoring the long ties, the fraternity and solidarity which have been existing between the Dominican Republic and Aruba for many decades now. In a relatively short period of time, work on realizing the Plaza Juan Pablo Duarte was completed.

Juan Pablo Duarte was a Dominican hero who taught us the value of the life of a man and his work does not end during his life. His idealism and dedication continues even after his life ends. His work remains as a source of inspiration. Juan Pablo Duarte was educated in Europe and had every opportunity to remain there to explore and develop perspectives beyond limit. But, he yearned to return to Santo Domingo! His love for his country made him cross the frontiers and return to the Dominican Republic. He chose to give his life for the development of his country.

Aruba's PM, regrettably could not attend the ceremonies as he is not on the island. But from Holland the PM sent his heartfelt congratulations to Mrs. Rosario de Rosa, the Counsel General of the Dominican Republic, and to the entire colony of Dominicans residing on Aruba, and to the people of Aruba for such a lovely symbol of unity.

The Hague orders Curaçao to clean up its finances

THE HAGUE --The former Dutch colony of Curaçao has been given until September by the government in The Hague to draw up a plan to get its finances in order.

Ministers discussed the difficult financial situation on the Caribbean island on the weekend during a cabinet meeting. It is the last time ministers will meet until after the summer break.

The decision to place a formal compliance order on Curaçao was 'not taken lightly', prime minister Mark Rutte told reporters after the meeting. The government's financial supervisory committee had recommended taking the step.

Curaçao's 2012 budget has a shortfall of 153m Antillean guilders, of which nearly 100 million guilders is needed to cover debts from previous years, home affairs minister Liesbeth Spies said.

The government wrote off the island's debt in 2010 when it and Sint Maarten became independent countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

This means the two countries have more independence in terms of law making and

government but that the Netherlands will keep an eye on their finances and remain responsible for defence and foreign policy.

According to news sources, Curaçao's prime minister Gerrit Schotte is planning to appeal against the decision to the Council of State.

Curaçao runs the risk of falling into a cycle of posting recurring budget deficits if policy makers fail to implement a plan to consolidate the deficit, and support the competitiveness of the island as a financial services domicile, the Central Bank of Curacao and Sint Maarten has said in its latest annual report on developments in 2011.

The report notes with concern that Curacao failed to achieve a balanced budget during 2011, despite a pledge made to the Netherlands upon its independence along with Saint Maarten. In order to retain a low-tax regime, in support of the island as an international financial centre, authorities must quickly implement fiscal consolidation while mitigating its impact on the economy, the Central Bank said.

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Just one time more

By Roland W. Peterson

*It was in nineteen twenty four
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*Today the gates are not
open anymore
Things are not like before
The streets are forsaken
The flame is not there any more*

*The merchant stands in the door
The minister is working like a beast
Hopes are on the giant from the far East*

*An answer is hard to be found
But we will turn it around
We did it before
Now it is just one time more*



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Water's Edge Restaurant now open at Costa Linda Beach Resort

The low-rise resort area just got blessed by a wonderful, contemporary eatery, situated on the water's edge at Costa Linda Beach Resort. Veteran hotelier and restaurateur Roy Leitch closed his popular Turtle's Nest restaurant there last year, and opted for a total remake and redesign. Construction took over one year but the end result in the form of the Water Edge Restaurant, 12 Degrees, North, is spectacular.

The new Water's Edge features a spacious bar under a giant palapa, with numerous flat-screen TVs, umbrella-table on the beach, toes in the sand, and an elegant, stylish, air-conditioned octagon-shaped dining room which opens in the evening hours for a la carte dinner.

All day dining with a spectacular ocean view is what Water's Edge does best, with Chef Harold and Chef Angelo in the kitchen assisted by sous-chef Evelyn.



The charming wait staff serves breakfast from 7am to 11am, lunch from 11am to 4pm and dinner from 4pm to 11pm. On the menu burgers, sandwiches, wraps, appetizers,

soups and salads for lunch, steaks, pasta and seafood for dinner. The food is very reasonably priced, the portions colossal and the ambiance unforgettable tropical.

Joanne and Charlene honored as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba

Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority honored two lovely ladies for their more than 20 consecutive visits to our island. Mrs. Joanne Whesper and daughter Mrs. Charlene Loesch from Briek NJ, USA. were honored as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba.

This symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination.

The certificate was presented to them by Mr. Ernest Giel representing



the Aruba Tourism Authority in presence of with Mrs. Teresa Britten representing the Aruba Beach Club, where the honorees are staying.

Mrs. Diane Stokes honored at Paradise Beach Villas

Recently Mrs. Diane Stokes resident of Front Royal Virginia was honored as Distinguished Visitor of Aruba. The honor was bestowed on her after returning to Aruba for 15 years consecutive.

Ms. Darline de Cuba, representing Aruba Tourism Authority, and Bianca van der Biezen and Sylvia Anjez fuenmayor conducted a small ceremony for her at Paradise Beach Villas, her home away from home.



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Bon Bini Festival is tonight



The weekly Bon Bini Festival takes place tonight at the Fort Zoutman in Wilhelminastraat. Bon Bini Festival is the only weekly folkloric event on the island. Come mingle with the locals and enjoy a taste of Aruban culture.

This week the festival will feature music by the traditional Aruba caha di orgel, folkloric music, dance performance and brass band.

During the festival there will be local food, sweets and traditional local arts and crafts on sale.

Arubus has regular busses from all hotels areas to Oranjestad Central Terminal, which is only a short walk from Fort Zoutman. Round trip bus fare is \$2.30. The festival is from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Entrance fee is \$3.

Come and experience a taste of our 'dushi' Aruba



Fitch affirms Aruba Airport Authority NV's US\$24.9MM Revenue Bonds at 'BBB'

NEW YORK -- Fitch Ratings has affirmed the 'BBB' rating on US\$24.9 million of outstanding Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (the authority) airport revenue bonds. The Rating Outlook is Stable.

--Sustained traffic performance: Aeropuerto Internacional Reina Beatrix (the airport) has a steady enplanement record since 2004. The tourism sector in Aruba has proven to be resilient against external and domestic shocks

in recent years. Traffic levels appear to grow in line with expectations, reaching record-breaking figures in 2011.

--Strong global operator: The airport has a strategic management agreement with Schiphol in place which continues to maintain favorable operations and services. Greater cost savings and operations efficiencies reflect the operator's improved management practices.

--Pricing power ability:

The authority is able to independently adjust fees and charges with respect to any service or facility in order to meet at least a minimum of 1.35 times (x) debt service coverage ratio (DSCR).

--Favorable carrier diversification: Single carrier concentration is considered low, with enplaning below 14% of total commercial traffic. The largest three airlines, combined, capture nearly 36% of the overall passenger traf-

fic.

--Adequate capital plan funding: Medium-term capital requirements may be completely financed with operating cash flows and restricted cash balances. The airport's internally-funded capital program does not consider any near-term future issuance.

--Modest debt burden: The level of leverage is considered low with respect to the project's cash flow generation profile. Restricted cash bal-

ances, currently replenished at levels above outstanding debt balance, serve as guarantee for debt service payments.

--Considerable market risk: The airport serves a limited economic area with significant dependence on the tourism industry and a narrow enplanement base. Similar to other leisure destinations in the region, the airport presents a high concentration of U.S. passengers.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Romney stands firm: no new tax returns

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Mitt Romney yesterday brushed off mounting pressure from President Barack Obama and even some Republicans to release more tax returns, as the White House battle grew increasingly acrimonious.

Romney lashed out at the Obama team's "dishonest" attacks on his business record, but the president again questioned his credentials and Democrats repeated charges that the Republican flag-bearer may have committed a felony over his Bain Capital disclosures.

The sparring and persistent personal nature of the attacks has ramped up dramatically in the past week as both campaigns brace for a steamy summer of political punch and counterpunch.

The focus has veered between Romney's time running Bain Capital and his tax records, with the presumptive nominee standing firm even as some in his own party advise him to release more information.

tion.

"We're going to put out two years of tax returns," Romney told the "Fox & Friends" program, referring to the 2010 return he has already released and the full 2011 return he has vowed to release before the November 6 election.

2008 Republican nominee John McCain ran for president and released two years of tax returns," he said.

Democrat John Kerry ran in 2004, and "his wife, who has hundreds of millions of dollars, she never released her tax returns. Somehow this wasn't an issue," Romney added.

"The Obama people keep on wanting more and more and more. More things to pick through, more things for their opposition research to try to make a mountain out of."

The White House argues that Romney's lack of transparency shows he has something to hide, and some leading Republicans are now urging their candidate to act now before the issue overshadows his

campaign.

"He should release the tax returns tomorrow. It's crazy," iconic conservative commentator William Kristol said on "Fox News Sunday."

Republican Governor Robert Bentley of Alabama and several other leading conservative figures have also called on Romney to release more tax data.

Romney's wealth, estimated to be around \$250 million, has repeatedly surfaced as an issue during the campaign as Obama tries to paint his rival as out of touch with ordinary Americans.

Much of his fortune lies hidden in a network of opaque offshore investments in the Cayman Islands and Bermuda.

Democrats have launched a coordinated assault on Romney's use of offshore tax havens and on his time running the private equity firm he founded, Bain Capital, which the candidate touts as business experience for turning around the flagging American economy.

War comes to Damascus in Syria revolt 'turning point'

Continued from page 1

"Al-Midan and Tadamon are out of the army's control," said Ahmed al-Khatib, spokesman for the Free Syrian Army's (FSA) military council in Damascus.

"The army has no presence inside either of these neighbourhoods any more, though they are shelling from the outside, and clashes on the edges of the neighbourhoods continue."

As battles raged around Damascus for a second straight day, troops deployed armoured vehicles near the historic neighbourhood of Al-Midan.

"When there is fighting in the capital for several hours, even days, and troops are unable to control the situation, that proves the regime's weakness," Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights told AFP.

An activist on the ground, identifying himself as Abu Musab, said the army was trying to overrun Al-Midan and called the fighting a "turning point" in the revolt against Assad's autocratic regime.

Activists said the army and FSA rebels had also been locked in fierce clashes since Sunday in the southern Damascus neighbourhood of Tadamon, Kfar Sousa in the west and Jobar in the east. They said the clashes were the heaviest in the capital since the March 2011 start of the uprising.

The authorities vowed yesterday they would not surrender the capital. "You will never get Damascus," read the headline in Al-Watan newspaper, which is close to the regime.

"Security forces, backed by the army, have for the past 48 hours been attacking the terrorist groups as they try to pull back to districts on the outskirts," the paper said.

A resident of nearby Jarana said the area was like a "war zone."

Activists said residents were fleeing Tadamon, with many seeking shelter in the nearby Yarmuk Palestinian refugee camp, as the opposition Syrian National Council accused the regime of transforming Damascus into "battlefields."

Rebel-held districts of the central city of Homs, which has been under siege for months, were bombarded yesterday, according to the Observatory, which reported 10 people including four civilians and six rebels killed nationwide.

In Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross sounded a note of alarm, saying Syria is in a state of all-out civil war and that all sides must respect humanitarian law or risk facing war crimes prosecutions.

"Each time there is fighting we can see conditions that can be defined as a non-international armed conflict," ICRC spokesman Alexis Heeb told AFP, adding "international humanitarian law applies" in such circumstances.



ATHENS : A man refreshes himself in a park in central Athens. Temperatures in Athens were set to exceed 42 degrees Celsius (107.6 Fahrenheit) at the close of this year's hottest week that earlier forced authorities to make air-conditioned halls available to the public. Greece's hottest day this year is forcing authorities to shut down the Athens Acropolis six hours before schedule in the interests of visitor health, the site's guards said yesterday. (AFP PHOTO)

UN: Cross-border criminals make \$870 billion a year

VIENNA - Turnover of cross-border organized crime is about \$870 billion a year, more than six times the total of official development aid, and stopping this "threat to peace" is one of the greatest global challenges, a U.N. agency said yesterday.

The most lucrative businesses for criminals are drug trafficking and counterfeiting, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said, launching an awareness-raising campaign about the size and cost of cross-border criminal networks.

"Millions of victims are af-

fected each year as a result of the activities of organized crime groups with human trafficking victims alone numbering 2.4 million at any one time," UNODC said in a statement.

The total estimated figure of \$870 billion is equivalent to 1.5 percent of the world's gross domestic product, it said, warning that crime groups can destabilize entire regions.

"Stopping this transnational threat represents one of the international community's greatest global challenges," UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov said.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pink uniforms, record traffic as Olympians fly into London



Members of Russia's Olympic sailing team arrive at Heathrow airport in west London. The Olympic Athletes' Village opened its doors yesterday to the first competitors as the logistical operation to handle the arrival of thousands of athletes and officials shifted into a higher gear. (AFP PHOTO)

LONDON (AFP) -- Athletes and Olympics visitors descended on London yesterday in the first wave of arrivals for the Games, bumping up traffic through the capital's busy Heathrow airport to record levels.

Around 1,000 members of the so-called "Olympic family", including 350 athletes, were

flew into Heathrow on the first day of arrivals, as a brigade of cheerful volunteers swung into action to welcome them.

In total almost 237,000 passengers were set to pass through the airport on the western edge of the British capital, compared to 190,000 on an ordinary day.



A taxi drives past an Olympic Lane marking on the Embankment on July 16, 2012 in London, England. The first Olympic lanes were closed to all but Olympic traffic in London yesterday, though many have stayed open.

More heavy rain hampers Japan clean-up

YAME (AFP) - Heavy rain again lashed southwest Japan yesterday, triggering fears of more landslides and hampering the clean-up operation after a record deluge that left at least 32 people dead or missing.

Four days of torrential rain have fallen on Kyushu island, causing rivers to burst their banks, the muddy floodwaters destroying or inundating houses. Troops were called in Sunday to airlift supplies to those stranded.

Electricity remained cut off to 2,100 houses in the northern part of Kyushu, according to Kyushu Electric Power Co., while local governments rushed out emergency response teams to villagers isolated by landslides.

Helicopters had been dispatched to rescue the elderly.

But efforts to restore electricity and normality faced difficulties with the arrival yesterday of yet further relentless rain. The meteorological agency warned of more landslides if the rain did not stop.

There is also the threat of a typhoon that is over the Pacific and projected to head towards southwest Japan.

Most of the 400,000 people who were ordered or advised



Japan Self-Defence Force soldiers search for missing people at an area hit by landslides caused by heavy rains in Aso, Kumamoto prefecture.

to evacuate their homes were allowed to return after authorities began lifting evacuation orders Sunday. But 6,000 were still under instructions to stay away.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda told a television interview that the government was ready to take "swift measures" to help victims recover from the disaster.

The death toll from landslides and floods rose to 28 yesterday afternoon as the bodies of two men aged 30 and 57

were recovered separately, while rescuers continued searching for four missing people.

Television footage showed rescue divers searching a river, while troops looking for bodies scoured flooded rice fields.

Residents together with volunteers and local government officials shovelled mud and moved damaged furniture from their homes, while mechanical diggers removed fallen trees and debris from the roads.

Mubarak back to prison on prosecutor's orders

CAIRO (AFP) - Egypt's ex-president Hosni Mubarak, who was convicted over the death of protesters, yesterday headed back to prison from a military hospital after the prosecutor general ordered his transfer.

Egypt's prosecutor general ordered Mubarak to be returned to jail nearly a month after he was moved to a military hospital in Cairo after reportedly suffering a stroke.

Abdel Meguid Mahmud

"has issued an order to transfer former president Hosni Mubarak from the Maadi Armed Forces Hospital to Tora prison hospital after an improvement in his health," the prosecutor general's office said.

On July 4, Mahmud had ordered the formation of a committee of medical experts to look into the 84-year-old Mubarak's health, and determine whether he could be moved back to jail, deputy

prosecutor general Adel al-Saeed said.

The doctors agreed that "Mubarak's health is currently stable with medication, and it is considered good for someone of his age," Saeed said.

The committee found "no reason for the convict to currently remain in the Armed Forces Hospital in Maadi or any other hospital" with special facilities, he said.

Health & Living

Massive supply shortage at Guatemala's main hospital

(AFP) - Managers of Guatemala's biggest hospital have declared the facility to be in a state of emergency due to a massive supply shortage.

"There are no sutures, bandages, gauze, laboratory tests or X-rays, so we have decided to declare a state of calamity," Roosevelt Hospital's board president Arnoldo Lopez told reporters.

He said doctors were "can-

celing appointments for new patients, as well as restricting elective surgeries, lab work and outpatient X-rays."

Guatemalan President Otto Perez acknowledged the country was experiencing a crisis in its health system but denied that the Roosevelt was experiencing supply shortages.

He said Health Minister Jorge Villavicencio indicated that the hospital was operating

with 72 percent of needed surgical material and 74 percent of drugs.

"The hospital has supplies. We have declared a state of calamity from the beginning, but in our public health system," Perez said.

The Roosevelt serves between 500 and 600 emergency room patients each day, along with 2,000 outpatient visits.



WASHINGTON - The first-ever daily pill to help prevent against HIV was approved Monday by US regulators for use in uninfected adults who are at risk for getting the virus that causes AIDS. Truvada, made by Gilead Sciences in California, has been on the market since 2004 and was approved by the Food and Drug Administration for a new use as a tool to help ward off HIV in otherwise healthy people, in combination with safe sex and regular testing. The pill as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been hailed by some AIDS experts as a potent new tool against human immunodeficiency virus, but some health care providers are concerned it could encourage risky sex behavior. In addition, the regimen is estimated to cost around \$14,000 per year, making it out of reach of many. Truvada was previously approved as a treatment for people infected with HIV to be used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs. The decision by the FDA followed the advice of an independent panel in May that supported Truvada for prevention in uninfected people, after clinical trials showed it could lower the risk of HIV in gay men and heterosexual couples. AFP



MUMBAI : This photo shows Indian cancer patient Brijender Singh (R) being examined by Pankaj Chaturvedi (L) during a routine check-up at the Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai. The western Indian state of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital, has become the fourth state this year to outlaw gutka - a cheap, mass-produced mix of tobacco, crushed areca nut and other ingredients - which campaigning doctors say is targeted at children -- despite consumption being illegal for under-18s. They point the finger primarily at gutka for India's 75,000 to 80,000 new cases of oral cancer a year, the highest in the world, according to the US-based Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. AFP PHOTO



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Fat studies conference challenges supersize stereotypes



Cat Pause, conference organiser and US-born academic holds her scale during New Zealand's first fat conference at Massey University in Wellington.

WELLINGTON (AFP) - Cat Pause proudly describes herself as "fat", can live with euphemisms like "curvy", "chunky" or "chubby", but baulks at what she believes are value-laden labels such as "overweight" or "obese".

The US-born academic is a pioneer in the emerging field of fat studies, organising New Zealand's first conference on the topic at Massey University's Wellington campus last week.

Fat studies, she explains, is an academic discipline just like history, English or political science, but it examines attitudes towards fat people and challenges the assumption that anyone with a bulging waistline is unhealthy.

At the conference, scholars from as far afield as the United States and Australia discussed papers such as "Fat hatred and the Left in the time of the obesity epidemic" and "The role of diagnosis in marginalising corpulence".

Pause said the reality is that some people are just bigger than others and fat studies highlighted the need for society to accept the fact, rather than constantly judging fat people and pushing them to

lose weight.

One of its first tasks, she said, was to reclaim the word "fat" so it was not used solely as an insult, in much the same way the gay community adopted the term "queer".

People now call themselves fat activists and speak of fat pride, refusing to accept what they say is pressure from the multi-billion weight loss industry to strive for a skinny ideal.

This explains Pause's aversion to "overweight", which she says implies she is above her perfect weight. She says she has not weighed herself for years and last time she did she tipped the scales at about 130 kilograms (237 pounds).

Similarly, she says "obesity" is a term "used by the medical community to pathologise fat bodies, making it a disease".

-- Exploiting insecurities --

Massey University lecturer Andrew Dickson said the weight-loss industry was built around exploiting the insecurities of fat people.

"We know 95 percent of people who attempt to lose weight will fail to do so, therefore, there is not a weight-loss industry, what they do is sell solutions to weight anxiety,"

he said. Dickson himself said he had never been as stressed as when he reduced his weight from 130 kilograms to 86, obsessively completing endurance runs, dieting constantly and taking prescription medicines to slim down.

Now weighing 100 kilograms, Dickson says he is healthy even though conventional weight charts would classify him as obese, still running about 60 kilometres (37 miles) a week and referring to himself as "the fat athlete".

Critics say asserting that obesity is not necessarily a major health problem flies in the face of medical evidence about diseases such as diabetes and other issues, a claim disputed by fat activists.

-- 'Daily' insults --

The fat issues movement, while addressing serious issues, is not without a strain of self-deprecating humour.

Dickson lobbies running clubs to introduce a "Clydesdale class" for hefty athletes, while Pause has a set of bathroom scales from the US where the numbers have been replaced with words like "hot", "perfect" and "sexy".

In the Australian city of Melbourne, a synchronised swimming club for fat women has been set up called Aquaporko.

Pause said there were laws against racism and sexism but discrimination against fat people was just as commonplace and was not just tolerated but, in a sense promoted, by governments running anti-obesity campaigns.

"It's not illegal to discriminate against someone based on their size, whereas it's illegal in most countries to discriminate based on someone's sex or race, sexual orientation is becoming more protected too," she said.

"I'd like size to become a protected class."

Sci-Tech**June 2012 Ranks As Fourth Warmest**

The planetary warm spell continued through June; last month ranked as the fourth warmest June since record keeping began in 1880, according to the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

Much of the world saw higher-than-average temperatures for June, where last month brought the warmest 12-month period since the late 19th century. In addition to most of North America, Eurasia and northern Africa also saw much higher-than-average monthly temperatures, according to NOAA.

Only Australia, northern and western Europe, and the northwestern United States were notably cooler than average, NOAA reported. (In the United States, this year's heat wave has been confined to the eastern two-thirds of the country.) Christchurch, New Zealand, where it is winter, had its coolest daily maximum temperatures in more than 130 years of national recordkeeping.



YAME - Heavy rain again lashed southwest Japan on Monday, triggering fears of more landslides and hampering the clean-up operation after a record deluge that left at least 32 people dead or missing. Four days of torrential rain have fallen on Kyushu island, causing rivers to burst their banks, the muddy floodwaters destroying or inundating houses. Troops were called in Sunday to airlift supplies to those stranded. Electricity remained cut off to 2,100 houses in the northern part of Kyushu, according to Kyushu Electric Power Co., while local governments rushed out emergency response teams to villagers isolated by landslides. There is also the threat of a typhoon that is over the Pacific and projected to head towards southwest Japan. Rainfall of up to 81.7 centimetres (32.2 inches) has been recorded in hardest-hit Aso, situated at the foot of a volcano in Kumamoto. The death toll from landslides and floods rose to 28 Monday afternoon as the bodies of two men aged 30 and 57 were recovered separately, while rescuers continued searching for four missing people.

AFP/Photo

Globally, April and May 2012 ranked in the top 10 for average warmth, while March, February and January all made the top 25 since 1880.

June 2012 was the 328th consecutive month with a global temperature above the 20th century average.

As of July 3, 56 percent of the continental United States was experiencing drought conditions — this marks the largest area affected by drought in the 12-year record kept by the U.S. Drought Monitor. Drought was not universal. The United Kingdom had its wettest June since national record keeping began in 1910 and Stockholm, Sweden, had its wettest June ever since 1786, according to NOAA.

Since weather has natural ups and downs, climate scientists resist attributing extreme events, such as a severe storm or heat wave, or even short-term weather, such as an unusually hot season or year, to human caused-climate change. However, they also note, temperature records reveal a long-term trend for warming that has been picking up speed. For example, the first decade of this century was the warmest on record, according to NOAA's State of Climate in 2010 report.

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Apple to release latest iPad in China on July 20



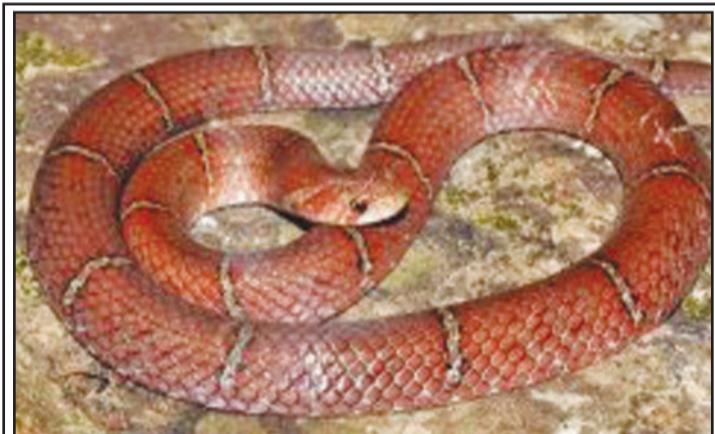
BEIJING- (AFP) Apple announced that it will begin selling the latest version of its market-leading iPad in China on July 20.

The news comes on the heels of Apple paying \$60 million to end a dispute over the iPad name in China, giving the US tech giant more certainty in selling its tablet computer in the huge market.

Apple paid the sum to settle its long-running legal battle with Chinese computer maker Shenzhen Proview Technology.

Third-generation iPad models will range in price from \$499 for a Wi-Fi version with 16 gigabytes of memory to \$829 for a 64-gigabyte iPad capable of connecting to telecom networks as well as wireless Internet hotspots.

Greater China -- which includes Hong Kong and Taiwan -- has become Apple's fastest-growing region, with revenues second only to the United States.



PHNOM PENH (AFP) - A new species of snake which is scarlet with black and white rings has been discovered in Cambodia's rainforest, conservationists announced on Monday. The reptile, which has been named the Cambodian Kukri, was found in the southwest Cardamom Mountains, an area under threat from habitat loss, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) said in a statement. Kukri snakes are so named because their curved rear fangs -- designed to puncture eggs -- are similar in shape to the Nepalese kukri knife, FFI said. "Most kukri snakes are dull-coloured," said Neang Thy, one of the herpetologists who discovered the new species. "But this one is dark red with black and white rings, making it a beautiful snake."

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US hails WTO win vs. China on electronic payments

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States yesterday welcomed a WTO decision upholding its claim that China discriminates against US suppliers of electronic payment services, including credit and debit cards.

US Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk said the victory in the World Trade Organization dispute would allow US companies to compete on a level playing field with China's own company, China Union Pay, which has dominated the EPS market.

"The WTO panel agrees that China's pervasive and discriminatory measures deny a level playing field to American service providers, which are world leaders in this sector," Kirk said. "This decision will help US companies and increase American jobs as a more efficient credit and debit payment system in China enables consumers to buy more goods, including quality, made-in-America products."

According to industry estimates, the United States will gain 6,000 jobs related to electronic payment services, the Obama administration said.

Most of the world's top providers of electronic payment services for credit and debit card transactions are headquartered in the United

States.

The administration launched the electronic payment services case against China at the WTO in September 2010, with a request for consultations.

In February 2011, the US requested the WTO set up a dispute settlement panel in the ongoing row with China, where more than \$1 trillion EPS transactions are processed each year.

The WTO found that China had violated trade rules in its regulations that also entrenched China Union Pay as the dominating force in the market.

Violations were found China's requirements on EPS related to banks issuing or doing business with merchants, as well as on the processing equipment and automated teller machines (ATMs).

Both sides have 60 days to appeal the WTO decision.

IMF: Libor scandal undermines market confidence

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The scandal of banks having manipulated the Libor global interest rate benchmark is taking a toll on confidence in the markets, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday.

"The most serious consequence of this scandal, which is under investigation, is that it undermines the certainty and the trust that markets have in benchmarks," said Jose Vinals, director of the IMF's Monetary and Capital Markets Department.

"This is why it's very important that the efforts which are currently under way and which are dealing with the regulation of financial institutions be completed... (and) that

the overhanging risk from US political stasis that could send the country over a "fiscal cliff" due to laws that, if not changed, will force massive government spending cuts coupled with automatic tax hikes on January 1 that would severely crunch the world's largest economy.

The IMF said the world economy appeared weaker since its assessment just three months ago, and while growth was only slightly off the expected pace, "downside risks continue to loom large."

If policy reactions in major economies remain inadequate or too slow, the IMF said, fissures could deepen, with risks particularly high in Spain and Italy, IMF economists said.

"In the past three months, the global recovery, which was not strong to start with, has shown signs of further weakness," the fund said in its quarterly revision of economic forecasts.

"Financial market and sovereign stress in the euro-area periphery have ratcheted up," it said, while growth has fallen below expectations in a number of major emerging-market economies.

It pointed to renewed deterioration in the markets for European sovereign debt as a sign that eurozone leaders need to move fast on pledged reforms.

"The main risk is obvious," said IMF chief economist Olivier Blanchard.

"It is that the vicious circle in Spain and Italy becomes stronger, that output falls even more than it does, that one of these countries loses its financial access to markets," he told reporters.

"The implications of such an event could easily derail the world recovery."

The IMF also singled out

Finance

IMF: Risks to global growth rising

But in addition the IMF saw slower-than-expected growth in the United States, Britain and France, among the major industrialized nations. The US forecast dropped 0.1 point to 2.0 percent; France was down 0.1 to 0.3 percent; and Britain was projected to grow at just 0.2 percent, compared with 0.8 percent forecast three months ago.

The bank also said Spain's recession would persist through 2013, after having forecast in April that the country's economy would return to growth next year.

On the bright side, forecasts for this year for Germany and Japan were revised higher -- to 1.0 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively, though the 2013 prediction for each was also trimmed slightly.

The IMF said that major economies were making progress on cutting their fiscal deficit burdens, but that doing so remained hampered by more volatility and risk aversion in debt markets, which have sent the borrowing costs of the troubled eurozone periphery countries skyrocketing.



An artist's rendition courtesy of the California High-Speed Rail Authority shows a high speed train passing through Mission Beach, California. The California state Assembly approved an \$8 billion high-speed rail financing plan that likely will face a tougher vote in the Senate over the system's projected \$68 billion cost and concerns about its management.

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Current as of: 07/16/2012	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate	
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80	
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20	
Canada	CAD	1.73	1.75	1.77	
Britain	GBP	2.70	2.75	2.81	
Switzerland	CHF	180.37	181.09	181.89	
Netherlands	EUR	214.92	216.88	219.06	
Sweden	SEK	24.17	24.89	25.69	
Denmark	DKK	28.18	28.90	29.70	
Norway	NOK	28.13	28.85	29.65	
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NEW YORK (AFP) - "Pulp Fiction" and "Kill Bill" actress Uma Thurman is a mother again at 42, after giving birth to a baby girl, her publicist said Monday. The newborn is the third child for the star, and her first with financier partner Arpad Busson. "A baby girl! Mommy and baby are doing really well," the star's spokeswoman Gabrielle Kachman told AFP, giving no further details. Thurman and Busson, 49, have had a stormy relationship. They planned to marry after starting dating in 2007, but broke off their engagement in 2009, then reunited last year, the New York Daily News reported. The actress was married to actor Ethan Hawke from 1998-2004, and had two children, daughter Maya and son Levon, now 14 and 10 respectively. She was also married to British actor Gary Oldman before the couple split in 1992. Busson is also father to sons Flynn, 14, and Cy, 9, with his former fiancee supermodel Elle Macpherson.

Frail Nelson Mandela turns 94



after he stepped down from office, calls on people to devote 67 minutes of their time to charity work.

The number 67 represents each year of Mandela's life in active politics.

Andrew Mlangeni, an anti-apartheid activist who was imprisoned with him on Robben Island, said striving to emulate his values would be the best tribute.

"Living up to the ideals that he sacrificed so much for would be the greatest gift South Africans today could give Mandela," the 86-year-old told AFP.

"I wish him long life and good health. His presence is a blessing to all us South Africans and the world," he added.

Madiba, as he is affectionately called, was last seen looking frail in a rare television appearance on May 30 to receive a symbolic flame marking the centenary of his party, the African National Congress.

Mandela's long-time secretary Zelda la Grange last week said he was in good shape.

"He is 94, so he is as well as any 94-year-old," La Grange told national radio station 5FM. "He is healthy, he is well taken care of by family and the

medical staff around him."

Last week, President Jacob Zuma described him as being in "good health" after a home visit to Mandela in Qunu ahead of his birthday.

South Africans across the nation will sing a special rendition of Happy Birthday at 0600 GMT on Wednesday, in an attempt by a Johannesburg-based civil society group to set a world record of the most people singing the rhyme at the same time.

In Qunu the Nelson Mandela museum is holding youth artist upliftment projects. In nearby Mvezo, where he was born, family head Chief Mandla Mandela will hand over books to local schools.

South Africa's first black president, Nelson Mandela gained worldwide respect for his personal sacrifices in fighting the white-minority regime that jailed him for 27 years, and ushering in a peaceful transition to democracy.

On his release in 1990, he led negotiations that paved the way to elections in 1994.

He served one term before stepping down in 1999.

Mandela used his warmth, dignity and self-deprecating humour to help heal racial divisions.

His reconciliation efforts earned a Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, shared with apartheid's last president FW de Klerk.



CAPE TOWN, South Africa - Former Robben Island prisoners (from L-R) Monde Mkunqwana, Saths Cooper, Sedick Isaacs, and Mzwandile Mdangi sign copies of the book "Reading Revolution, Shakespeare on Robben Island" by Ashwin Desai, on the day of its launch, on June 25, 2012, at Robben Island, off Cape Town, where the former prison was turned into a museum. Robben Island was where many anti-Apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, were imprisoned during South Africa's Apartheid era. But the prison was also a place where prisoners helped each other with education. Reading Revolution is a book about reading and the lengths to which political prisoners would go, in the island prison, to read, write, and study. The book centres on a copy of The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, which political prisoner, Venkatrathnam, disguised as a "Hindu Bible", so the prison authorities would allow him to keep it. Prisoners had very limited access to books on Robben Island. Many of the prisoners, including Mandela, read the disguised Shakespeare book, and marked off their favourite passages in it.

AFP PHOTO

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Adorable and affordable; 5 Burgers Aruba offers an island twist to the great American Burger

Expatriates from Boston, Massachusetts, residing on Aruba, Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. Some may be quite well acquainted with a nationally known U.S franchise bearing the name "5", and patrons can expect the same great quality between the buns, but an expanded menu and Rosie and Aaron's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu.

"You never get a second too



Rosie and Aaron love their Burger



Gouda Burger 2

chance to make a first impression," comments Aaron; and upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

Prices vary only slightly between regular and small (basically 2 patties or 1) with specialty items such as Gouda Burger, Farmer's Burger, Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with crispy onion rings and BBQ sauce. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jalapeño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries, which are made from hand-cut fresh

Idaho potatoes, is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!" Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

If you are a fan of crispy friend onion rings, as we are at THE MORNING NEWS, you cannot leave there without trying their secret recipe batter-dipped gourmet rings, made from fresh, not frozen onions. Unquestionably, the best we have had anywhere, and for those that like a little spice, the fried jalapeños are a real treat. Aaron and Rosie have expanded their menu to accommodate certain tastes and dietary needs; they offer a tasty grilled chicken sandwich as well.

5 Burgers Aruba is open for lunch & dinner – daily hours are Noon to 10-ish; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for the owners when things are not too busy, to sit and chat while sharing their knowledge of the island. Totally yummy and fun plus a great deal for a quality burger, they are definitely worth a visit



Summer Olympics: July 27 - August 12



Iran trailblazer dreams of table tennis medal

TEHRAN (AFP) - Iran's first woman to compete in table tennis at the Olympics, Neda Shahsavari, says she is "thrilled" to be going to the London Games, and dreams of winning a medal for the Islamic republic.

Petite and agile, the 25-year-old physical education student from the western city of Kermanshah made history for Iran when she beat Kazakhstan's Yelena Shagarova at the Middle Asia Olympic qualifying tournament in Tehran in January.

"I was thrilled when I made it, beating Shagarova, since she had beat me two months before. It was an indescribable feeling," she told AFP after a training session for the London Games, which begin on July 27. "I have made it but I hope I won't be the last Iranian woman making it to the Olympics in table tennis," said Shahsavari, who joins seven other women representing the Islamic republic at the Olympics.

In order to get as far as possible in the tournament, she hopes not to meet one of the sport's strongest competitors from East Asia in the heats.

Table tennis is popular in Iran, and ping pong tables are widespread in the country's public parks.

Shahsavari said she was drawn to the sport by hearing the whack of the ball as a child.

"I was drawn to ping pong when I was 11. I loved the



sound the ball made hitting the table and the racket. I started hitting the ball onto the wall and ground and then eventually my parents got me a ping pong table," she said.

Mandatory Islamic dress code in Iran requires all women to cover their bodies from head to toe, and women athletes must adhere to these rules if they are to compete nationally and internationally.

Wearing a loose-fitting, long-sleeved jersey over a pair of tracksuit bottoms, with the Islamic headscarf, Shahsavari says she is comfortable with the outfit.

State-run television rarely shows women's sports events, though many Iranian women are avid sports enthusiasts and practitioners.

Several women have won medals in international tournaments that have allowed them to compete while wearing Is-

amic dress, notably Sara Khoshjamal-Fekri, then 21 years old.

She became a national celebrity as Iran's first female taekwondo Olympic qualifier and was listed by Time magazine as one of the "100 Olympic Athletes to Watch" at the Beijing 2008 Games, where she made it to the quarter finals before being knocked out.

Iran is sending 54 athletes to the London Games, including eight women competing in table tennis, hammer throwing, kayaking, rowing, archery, taekwondo and the women's 10m air rifle.

Iran first took part in the Olympics in 1948 in London, but it boycotted the 1980 Moscow and 1984 Los Angeles Games for political reasons.

In its 14 appearances, it has won 11 gold, 15 silver and 22 bronze medals.

Swimming legend Spitz backs Istanbul Games bid

ISTANBUL (AFP) - Olympic swimming legend Mark Spitz has given his backing to Istanbul's bid to host the 2020 Summer Games.

The 62-year-old - a winner of nine Olympic gold medals in all and with seven coming at the 1972 edition in Munich - was speaking on Sunday after he had braved racing 6.5km across the Bosphorus.

Spitz, who also presented medals after the race, commented on how the organisational ability shown by the city bodes well for hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020:

"Considering how much work will be required to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the organisa-

tional ability shown during this race highlights the promise of Istanbul. I am here to lend my support to Turkey."

Spitz, who also won Olympic silver and bronze, said that should Istanbul win it would be terrific for the largely young population.

Hasan Arat, a former top basketball player and now leader of the Istanbul 2020 Bid Committee, said it was a huge boost to get such backing from such a figure, even though he is not an IOC member and will not be voting when the decision is taken in Buenos Aires in September next year.

"The people of Turkey are greatly heartened by this show of support from Mark Spitz. I believe yesterday's race shows

the sporting world that Istanbul acts as a bridge between tradition and innovation."

Istanbul made the short list for the final vote along with Madrid, second to Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 renewal, and Tokyo, the only one of the three candidates to have hosted the Games before, in 1964.

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Sky defend tactics as sprint goes begging for Cav

PAU (AFP) - Team Sky manager Dave Brailsford defended his team's tactics Monday as Mark Cavendish was left with only the final stage to the Champs Elysees in Paris to try

and win this Sunday. Cavendish, who won a stage earlier in the race to take his tally to 21, lost his chance of contesting a bunch sprint when Sky and other teams failed to chase down a breakaway that went all the way at the end of stage 15.

In doing so, Brailsford also reaffirmed Sky's commitment to winning the bigger prize of the yellow jersey.

With Bradley Wiggins in the lead and Kenyan-born British teammate Chris Froome second at 2min 05sec, the Londoner is on the cusp of creating Tour de France history for Britain.

Two hilly stages in the Pyrenees will be contested in succession after today's second rest day.

With the Pyrenees coming up it made sense to conserve our energy or share the workload and others teams didn't want to share," said Brailsford.

His decision left a six-man group to go to the finish unhampered, Frenchman Pierrick Fedrigo taking his fourth career win on the race after a two-up sprint with American Christian Vande Velde.

With Cavendish's personal ambitions again shelved, Brailsford said he could understand if people said the Manxman -- who had won 20 stages from five previous participations -- was on the wrong team.

The most likely chance for Cavendish to claim win number 22 is now on the 20th and final stage to the Champs Elysees in Paris, where he has won the past three years.

"Certainly Paris will be a sprint stage," said Brailsford.

Wiggins, meanwhile, was keen to put the dilemma into perspective, saying the fastest man on two wheels had been "fantastic these last two and a half weeks".

"He's been so committed to my cause -- to the yellow jersey -- and he's a great champion and a great friend," he said.

"Obviously there is still the stage to Paris for him and we're going to lay it down in Paris for him and try and get him the win there."

"He's also got the Olympic road race... that's his main objective this year, so it's a shame that he hasn't had the chance to race for more stage wins but in the end we've got a difficult task on our hands to try and win the yellow jersey."

"So far, he's played a big part in that. We've seen him going back for bottles and, yesterday, he tried really hard to get over that first climb with us... he's also been an absolute gentleman this week."

Robben turns the page



(AFP) Dutch international striker Arjen Robben insisted Monday he had turned the page on a disappointing campaign with Bayern Munich and the Oranje and said he was looking forward to the new Bundesliga season.

"I can't look backwards - what's past is past, I have got my freshness back and I am ready for the new season," said Robben, who is in pre-season training with his club at Lake Garda in Italy.

The 28-year-old suffered heartache as Bayern lost out to Chelsea in the Champions League final, lost out to Dortmund in the Bundesliga and then saw the Dutch lose all three of their Euro 2012 pool matches.

Since then he has had a month off to recharge his batteries.

"I was far away from it all. I had a good time with my family and I'm happy to start off again. My motivation will be all the stronger," the former

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Athletes arrive in London, airport under pressure



General view of the Olympic Village at the Olympic Park in London.

LONDON (AFP) - The Olympic Athletes' Village opened its doors Monday to the first competitors as the logistical operation to handle the arrival of thousands of athletes and officials shifted into a higher gear.

London's Heathrow Airport was expecting to handle a record number of passengers, with the Olympics arrivals swelling numbers to almost 237,000 at the west London hub, compared to 190,000 on an ordinary day.

The first priority "Games Lane" went into operation on the M4 motorway leading from Heathrow, to allow athletes and officials to be whisked to their destinations without being delayed by London traffic.

It emerged that nine police forces have had to deploy extra officers to help with security for the Games, a week after the government was forced to draft in 3,500 troops to meet a shortfall in private security guards.

At Heathrow, where passengers have complained of being stuck in passport queues for several hours in recent weeks, the addition of

extra border officials appeared to have eased the process.

There were few complaints from spectators or athletes, who were greeted by more than 500 volunteers as they landed.

The Netherlands women's beach volleyball team flew in



A fully equipped training facility

from Amsterdam in a blaze of orange tops and said they were impressed by the setup.

One of the players, Marleen van Iersel, 24, told AFP: "From the moment we walked off the plane there were people helping us straight away. It is very well-

organised."

A large US contingent also arrived at Heathrow, including members of the sailing teams.

But experiences of the early arrivals were mixed, with two-time world 400 metres hurdles champion Kerron Clement claiming the bus ferrying him and his US teammates from Heathrow to the Athletes' Village had taken four hours.

Clement tweeted: "Um, so we've been lost on the road for 4hrs. Not a good first impression London."

However, the hurdler later tweeted to praise facilities at the athlete's village, located in the Olympic Park in Stratford, east London.

"Eating at the Olympic village," he wrote. "Love the variety of food choices, african, caribbean, Halal cuisine, india and asian and of course McDonalds."



Members of South Korea's gymnastics team arrive at Heathrow airport in west London

2,818 apartments across 11 residential blocks, each built around a courtyard offering athletes space to relax.

Organisers could do nothing though about the grey skies and persistent drizzle in

The furore over the giant private security firm G4S showed no signs of abating, despite ministers' insistence that the Games would be secure.

What is billed as the



Members of the Cuban Olympic team waiting for their bus.

London as athletes got a first taste of their home for the next three weeks.

The Australian team have already taken over several balconies of one block, with a banner reading "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie; Oi, Oi, Oi" draped across them.

biggest anti-doping operation in Olympic history also got under way on Monday.

Half of all competitors will be tested, with a team of 150 scientists taking more than 6,000 samples between now and the end of the Paralympic Games on September 9.